

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9414

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE BUCHAREST 5053

STADIS

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TAGS: AODE, EAGR, RO

SUBJ: MODE - FAS PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH AGATT OFFICE
 IN BUCHAREST IN FY 1978

REF: STATE 210561

1. WE UNRESERVEDLY SUPPORT MANY ARGUMENTS ADVANCED
BY USDA--INeed, MUCH OF RATIONALE WE OURSELVES
EMPLOYED IN SUPPORT OF VREATION OF FOREIGN NATIONAL
ANALYST POSITON. WE DO NOT, HOWEVER, SHARE USDA'S
CONCLUSION. SUBJECT TO APPROVAL BY AMBASSADOR,
EMBASSY CONSIDERS THAT ESTABLISHMENT OF ANY NEW
AGRICULTURAL POSITIONS IN FY 1978 WOULD BE PREMATURE
AND BELIEVES THAT JUDGMENT SHOULD BE RESERVED FOR
AT LEAST ADDITIONAL YEAR.

2. OUR RESERVATIONS ARE FUNDAMENTALLY TWO-FOLD.
PRIMARILY WE ARE CONCERNED ABOUT SLOWDOWN IN PACE
OF DEVELOPMENT OF OUR BILATERAL AGRICULTURAL
RELATIONS. SECONDLY, WE ARE UNCERTAIN AS TO NEED
FOR AGATT TO BOLSTER REPORTING CAPABILITY.

3. OVERRIDING CONSIDERATION IS QUESTION OF DEGREE
TO WHICH ROMANIANS INTEND TO IMPLEMENT OUR BILATERAL
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PROTOCOLS ON AGRICULTURAL TRADE AND COOPERATION.

OVER PAST YEAR WE HAVE BEEN SORELY DISAPPOINTED WITH GOR'S INABILITY OR UNWILLINGNESS TO INITIATE COOPERATIVE ACTIVITIES FORESEEN IN THESE DOCUMENTS. UNFORTUNATELY, WE DO NOT AT THIS STATE SENSE ANY POSITIVE CHANGE IN ATTITUDE.

4. ON MARKET DEVELOPMENT POSSIBILITIES OUR VIEWS ARE MIXED. WE PERCEIVE POTENTIAL FOR ESTABLISHING LONGER-TERM SUPPLY RELATIONSHIP IN FEEDGRAINS, ESPECIALLY SOYBEANS. EMBASSY AND AGATT IN BELGRADE CAN SUPPORT PROGRAMS TO EXPLOIT THIS POTENTIAL TO LIMITED EXTENT BUT CONCEIVABLY MAJOR EFFORT AT THIS JUNCTURE COULD PROVIDE CRUCIAL IMPETUS. AT SAME TIME, WE ALSO RECOGNIZE THAT COMMODITY COMPOSITION OF OUR BILATERAL AGRICULTURAL TRADE HAS SHIFTED DRAMATICALLY IN PAST SEVERAL YEARS, CONFIRMING OUR CONTINUING STATUS AS RESIDUAL SUPPLIER IN ROMANIAN MARKET. THIS PRIORITY IS NOT LIKELY TO CHANGE RAPIDLY IN VIEW OF ROMANIAN FOREIGN EXCHANGE RESTRAINTS AND CONSCIOUS GOR PREFERENCE FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRY SUPPLIERS.

5. USDA'S POSITION ON REPORTING SEEMS TO US TO REQUIRE FURTHER CLARIFICATION. TO OUR KNOWLEDGE, AGATT IN BELGRADE IS SATISFYING PERIODICAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS ON STRENGTH OF HIS VISITS HERE. MOREOVER, ONE OF PRINCIPAL PURPOSES IN ESTABLISHING ROMANIAN ANALYST POSITION FOR WHICH WE ARE NOW RECRUITING, IS TO BOLSTER REPORTING EFFORT. WHILE WE ARE UNDER NO ILLUSIONS THAT LOCAL EMPLOYEES IN EASTERN EUROPEAN ENVIRONMENT CAN PERFORM REPORTING DONE BY USDA LOCALS ELSEWHERE, WE THINK IT CONCEIVABLE THAT MOST USDA DATA NEEDS CAN BE FILLED BY ROMANIAN WORKING UNDER GUIDANCE OF BELGRADE AGATT AND EMBASSY.

6. IN SUM, THEREFORE, WE WOULD ADVOCATE THAT USDAO REQUEST BE KEPT PENDING UNTIL FY 1979, WHEN WE WOULD HOPE TO HAVE CLEARER PICTURE. IN SEEKING AMBASSADOR'S VIEWS WE TRUST THAT DEPARTMENT WILL MAKE OUR COMMENTS AVAILABLE TO HIM.
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